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Children's Corner.

JUST SUPPOSE.

(BY HARRIET T. COMSTOCK.)

I am quite sure, unless you had seen him in a tantrum, you never could have believed that Harold Allen and the Tantrum Boy were one and the same child.

Harold had a round little face, all dimples and smiles. His eyes were big and brown, and his hair like yellow corn silk. His mother tied the front of his hair over his left eye with a big blue bow, which gave Harold a perfectly bewitching appearance. When he was clothed and in his right mind, he wore a blue duck Russian blouse suit, all waist and belt, from under which his round bare legs incased in socks and russet shoes showed in all their chubby beauty. Harold Allen was lovely, and delight to all who knew him; but the Tantrum Boy! Oh, me!

He was a terrible object, dark of brow, with pouting lips and wrathful eyes. He tore the blue bow from Harold's hair, he soiled the dainty dress, and kicked the russet shoes in a most shocking manner. He even said words Harold barely knew.

One day Mrs. Allen dressed Harold in all his glory, gave him a kiss, and said: "There, now what does he want to do?"

"Go fishing in the lake!"

"But Harold, you have been to the lake all the morning, the sun is hot; and, besides, you are freshly dressed. You cannot go today."

"I want to!"

"But you cannot go, Mother will take you for a drive. We will."

"No, no! I almost had a fish this morning. I want to go and get him! I hate driving! I will go to the lake!"

Mother shook her head, and her lips grew firm. Thereupon Harold went down before the enemy, and the Tantrum boy raised the flag over the fallen hero. Suddenly Mrs. Allen arose, and there was a light of inspiration upon her face. She seized the Tantrum boy by the arm; firmly and relentlessly, she dragged him to the closed door of the closet, she took the little finger—the very littlest one—of the right hand, and placed the rosy tip in the keyhole! This is what she said:—

"Now, when Harold comes back and sees this dreadful boy standing here, he will drive him away. Don't you stir from the spot until Harold comes back!" With that she turned and left the room, turning the key in the hall door as she went.

The Tantrum Boy was simply appalled. There he stood like a little silly with his finger in the keyhole. There was no reason why he should not take it out; but the Tantrum Boy, like all ungoverned creatures, was a bit stupid. So he stared and stared at the closed door of the closet, too surprised to kick or yell. Still Harold did not return, and gradually a sullen stubbornness took possession of the hero of the key-hole. He would stand there forever! He would die at the hole! They would find him stiff and cold at his post. Already his arm was stiff, but he was very hot. Outside the summer day buzzed and droned sweetly. The elm-tree near the bedroom window swayed to and fro, just as if she were rocking the baby breezes to sleep, and Tantrum Boy listened, and grew strangely still.

Then he felt someone tugging at his finger, tugging at the end that was in the key-hole! At first he was frightened; for, pull as he would, he could not get away. Then, to his amazement, he felt himself following his finger, actually going through the key-hole, he a three-year-old Tantrum Boy! It was rather mortifying to his pride to think he was small enough for that; but so it was, and he had nothing to do but go. At last he was on the other side; but, to his horror, it was not the inside of the closet that he stood in, but a new and strange land, and, facing him, as ugly and ill-conditioned looking an object as even the Tantrum Boy had ever seen when looking in the mirror!

"Well, now that you are here, what do you think of it?" asked the cross creature, in a snarly voice.

"Where am I?" quivered Master Tantrum.

"In the land of Do-as-you-please."

"You are not very civil," Tantrum went on, but in a much milder voice.

"Well, what is that to you? You can't have all the black looks to yourself in this free country. Here I choose to storm and kick. What have you to say to that? You've done it long enough yourself to know how pleasant it is." With that the creature kicked out so alarmingly and made such a hideous outcry that Master Tantrum started back in terror.

"Come on!" said the mad thing, when he had spent his fury about nothing. "I am your twin brother. You may know me by the post on your lips." And, indeed, the post was a family mark. "My name is Fuss and Fume, and I am a perfect terror. I've been waiting for you on this side of the closet door for ages. It is outrageous the way they treat you out there—never letting you finish what you want to do, always telling you what

would happen if you did certain things. It's enough to make you tear your hair. Now in this country the things you wanted to do are alive and waiting for you, and you can do them—as far as they will let you—whenever you want to. Just think what you want to do first."

With that Tantrum Boy sat down by the roadside to think; and Fuss and Fume amused himself by going from one rage to another, screaming and crying in a most distracted manner. Just as Master Tantrum supposed, all the noise finally aroused all the inhabitants, and they came prancing to the spot,—wild crew, I assure you. Evidently, in that free country they all liked to cut capers—and, certainly, one had as much right as another. Tantrum b, the roadside had to acknowledge that; and soon the landscape of the beautiful land of Do-as-you-please was marred by a fierce, rioting mob, who filled the air with screams and shouts. "Why don't you join in?" called Fuss and Fume. "You used to like that sort of fun."

"I'm—I'm thinking," answered Tantrum, meekly. All his appetite for capers seemed gone.

"Oh, well, suit yourself!" And again the mad lot went on with their noise.

The more he thought, the more unhappy he became. He could do just as he pleased; but so could every one else, and it wasn't pleasant. Besides, the mere fact that he was free to go, and look up his past desires took all the longing away. Even before he found them, he realized in his humble heart that they were foolish and not worth while.

At last Fuss and Fume finished his idle temper, and came to Tantrum.

"Have you thought?" he asked surlily. "Mercy knows you made outcry enough on the outside of the door when you couldn't do things! Now, that you can do them, you act queer enough. I must say you look very much like Harold Boy, but we never could have gotten him through a key-hole! There is some sense and reason in him!"

A flash of shame covered Tantrum's face, and a sigh fluttered from between his pouting lips.

"Come, come!" snapped Fuss and Fume. "I didn't hunt you up for this. You've got to want to do something wrong! You shall! You shall! With that he went in such a passion that Tantrum cried aloud in fear. Oh! what did he want to do? He must think of some wrong thing, or all the other mad throng would be out again, cutting up capers to keep Fuss and Fume company.

Why, there was the fishing he had wanted to do! The little fish he had almost caught might be waiting for him that very minute! "I want to go to the lake!" shrieked Tantrum above the uproar. "I want to catch that little fish!"

"Come on then!" shouted Fuss and Fume. "And do kick or do something. When you are in Do-as-you-please, you must Do-as-you please do!"

This almost made Tantrum laugh, but all desire to scream and act foolishly had departed. Very solemnly he started to go fishing, while under his blue blouse his heart grew heavy with the sure knowledge that danger lay ahead.

A moment more and a blue lake lay before the two boys,—a beautiful lake, smooth and peaceful. But, as they looked, it was suddenly lashed into a wild sea, and Fuss and Fume remarked appreciatively: "The fish like to go in passions. It isn't nice for us; but, then, they have as much right as we!"

"But they are getting me all wet!" wailed Tantrum. "They are spoiling my clothes!"

"Oh, well, you have spoiled Harold's often enough. It's great fun, you know, to do exactly what you want to do, and never consider any one else!"

Down went Tantrum's head upon his spray-washed chest. How often he had screamed in the old days, "I don't care!" and that was what all the fish were screaming now, down there under the white-capped waves! While he looked in alarm at the scene of disorder and passion, out from the water came a large fish head, and in the most terrible voice Tantrum had ever heard came these words: "Here I am; catch me!"

"I've—I've changed my mind!" stammered poor, meek Tantrum.

"Well, I've changed mine, also. This morning I wanted you to catch me. Now I want to catch you!" Tantrum grew cold with fright. It was one thing to do wrong, quite another for wrong to do you. But in the land of Do-as-you-please equal rights exist, and one must expect that when he starts on his wild career.

"Catch me?" wailed the poor boy, "Oh! please, please don't!"

"I want to! I shall!" flapped the fish. "And so shall we!" piped in a wild chorus; and there from every direction came the things Tantrum had wanted to do in the black, misguided past.

There was all the jam he wanted to eat,—a sickly

thin creature, with every seed a little eye that pricked Tantrum like a pain as it ran forward.

There were the scissors that he wanted to cut his curls off with. Dear me! how they snapped as they hurled toward him, making for his curls! There was the ink bottle he had wanted to raint with, darkening the air as it came hurrying from a high shelf eager to paint him! Tantrum could stand no more! The sight of all those Wrong Things alive and ready for him in a frenzy of fear and anger. He remembered the key-hole. He knew that that was his only chance of escape from the land of Do-as-you-please and those twin brothers of his! for they all had pouting lips.

It was a neck-to-neck race over the ups and downs of that free country; but off in the distance was the door, and, shining through it like a star, the key-hole,—Tantrum's only hope!

Fast as! faster he went, Fuss and Fume on his heels, and the Things clattering after. At the doorway poor Tantrum halted, and a voice calm and clear sounded:—

"Who stands without?"

"Tantrum. Open, open to me!"

"Tantrum, eh? Well you are just where you belong. Among people like yourself. I've been watching you through the keyhole. You all look and act alike, and you are the most hideous lot I ever saw!"

"Who are you?" faltered Tantrum.

"Harold Allen." There was a new note in the little voice, a note of triumph. Tantrum understood, and grew smaller and smaller as he realized that he was conquered at last.

"Let me in!" he pleaded. "I will be your slave. I cannot live in this country. Let me in!"

"Crawl through!"

So painfully, slowly, Tantrum crawled through the key-hole, and once on the other side, he heard the birds sing, and saw the elm swaying in the gentlest way; and there upon the floor of the bedroom he crouched while his littliest finger ached, but the kind mother was beside him, and she said,—

"Who is this, Harold or Tantrum Boy?"

And a brave, sweet voice answered:—

"It's Harold, mother. He's come to stay for always. Please never, never put his finger in the keyhole. He might get pulled through."—The Christian Register.

Humpty Dumpty.

BY EMMA WILMOT.

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall," sang pretty Anna Hitchins to her little brother, as she sat on the front porch, inhaling the breath of spring flowers that fairly embowered them.

The little one clapped his dimpled hands and repeated: "Humpa Dumpa on a wall, Humpa Dumpa, dreat fall!" Then he broke into a merry laugh, such as only a child's voice can give. "All the king's horses and all the king's men, can't put Humpa together again." Can't put Humpa together again," echoed the child.

Will Hart, who lived in a small cottage adjoining the Hitchins' home, sat on the edge of the porch near Anna's feet listening to the jingle, and waiting for his little charge, for somehow the wee Owen Hitchins, named after a literary father, had fallen naturally into a way of following Will Hart from the time he saw the shaggy cap coming up the street on its way from school.

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall." Now run, little Humpa," said Anna, releasing the child from her plump arms, with his golden hair all tousled about his face, and he ran to Will, crying in his baby way:

"Take Humpa to see pigs!"

"Did you ever!" said Anna; "our baby has a new name."

"You're Humpa, is you?" asked Will, with an utter disregard of grammar, clasping the child in his long arms.

"Yes," lisped the baby, "Will's Humpa."

But Will's face was sober. Poor Will! He had already learned the serious nature of life.

"Say, Miss Anna, what do you mean about fallin' an' not gittin' up again?"

"O there you go, you literal boy," said Anna, taking up her crocheting. I never thought it meant anything except fun for the babies, but I'll try to point a moral for you. Wait, Will, I'll call Minnie, and going to the foot of the stairway in the great hall she called, "Minnie, do come down. Here's that hungry Will Hart!"

"There is plenty of gingerbread," replied a sweet voice from an upper room.

"Do give it to him, Anna."

"Oh," replied the girl. "It's mental food he wants. Bring your work down, Min; it's too lovely to be in doors."

The appeal was effectual; the dignified elder sister, with a face that told of self-conquest and great love, soon appeared.